



ASHESI UNIVERSITY

**AN OPERATIONAL MARKETING PLAN FOR MUNCHIES:
IMPROVING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND SERVICE QUALITY**

Undergraduate Applied Project Report submitted to The Department of Business
Administration, Ashesi University College in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the
award of Bachelor of Science degree in Management Information Systems

B.Sc. Management Information Systems

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature:

Candidate's Name: Adeline Quaye-Foli

Date:

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the Applied Project were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of Applied Project laid down by Ashesi University.

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Supervisor's Name: Dr. Kwami Justina Morris

Date:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Munchies is a Ghanaian-owned fast-food company, started by Daniel Kwaku Bempah in 2016. The aim of the business was initially to provide Ashesi University students with quality food at wee hours of the night when students are usually hungry, and cannot get food to eat. Since then, the business has evolved into a fully-fledged street-food vendor that provides a variety of sumptuous dishes.

A market study, and comprehensive needs assessment revealed that Munchies struggles with efficient and timely order management, and this is evident in the long waiting times that customers face anytime they are buying food. The study also discovered that poor employee retention as well as the employees' inability to follow stipulated recipes cause inconsistencies in the taste and quality of the food provided.

The aim of this project is to improve service quality, thus customer satisfaction by mitigating the abovementioned issues that have been brought to light within the operations of Munchies. Literature consulted divulged that "Quality and customer satisfaction have long been recognised as playing a crucial role for success and survival in today's competitive market" (Mansor, Hasanordin, Rashid, & Rashid, 2012). Scholars also agree on the paramount role that service quality has on "customer satisfaction, loyalty and repurchase intentions" (Ghotbabadi et al., 2015).

This project proposes a collaboration of recommendations to improve Munchies' quality of service and customer satisfaction ability, synthesised in a marketing plan using the 7 P's of the Marketing Mix as a framework for implementation and the Hierarchical Service quality framework as a justification for the suggested strategies. The proposed solution makes use of technology to process information efficiently and uses it as a tool to market Munchies, its business operation and market offerings to its customers.

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CHAPTER 1: INDUSTRY ANALYSIS, EXTERNAL ANALYSIS, COMPANY ANALYSIS

1.1 Chapter Overview

The first chapter of this project is dedicated to analysing the internal and external environment that Munchies operates. It assesses the industry at large and studies the factors which affect the firm both externally and internally. The external context consists of a political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental analysis which will evaluate the current state of the industry. The internal analysis, however, will include a company profile to assess the current standing of Munchies, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the firm derived from the findings of the needs assessment. This extensive analysis is carried out to determine how various factors can affect the profitability of Munchies.

1.1.1 Rationale for Project

The rationale for choosing Munchies as a client was first to help small scale student and alumnus-run businesses to thrive in the Ashesi market and to scale up their services. It is my goal that this project will become a template for all student-run businesses within the Ashesi community.

Secondly, the apparent needs of Munchies fall in line with key interest areas of mine that I wish to enhance. Owing to this, undertaking this project will be of mutual benefit to both me and Munchies, as well as the Ashesi community as a whole.

1.2 Industry Overview

1.2.1 Industry Analysis: The Fast Food Industry in Ghana

The industry Munchies plays in can be defined as the Fast food industry in Ghana, specifically in the Greater Accra region. Owing to this, the industry analysis studied the trends within that overarching industry.

A PESTLE Analysis was used to identify opportunities and threats within the market that drive the profitability, growth and volatility of Munchies within the industry. It also assesses how these external factors influence a firm's performance.

Table 1
Pestle Analysis

Factor	Description
Political Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy on tax subsidies for SMEs offered by the Ghana government creates an opportunity for Munchies to take advantage of. • Ghana's reputation for political stability creates a lucrative opportunity for new businesses such as Munchies
Economic Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The beginning of 2018 saw an unexpected fall in Ghana's GDP to an abysmal 8.1% • Incumbent players such as KFC and Papaye hold a large market share within the Ghanaian fast food industry.
Social Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A study by Omari et al., (2013) shows that in Ghana, 92% of fast food restaurants serve fried rice, 81% serve French fries, 74% sold fried chicken and 42% and 31% sold burgers and pizza respectively
Technological Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast food businesses are slowly steering towards technologies such as drive-throughs, point of sale (POS) systems, and more convenient payment systems. Eg. Mobile money
Legal Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are several laws pertaining to food in Ghana, and these standards are enforced by the Ghana Food and Drugs Authority as well as the Ghana Standards Authority.
Environmental Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open grills and charcoal flames are common associations with fast food and roadside vendors causing harmful emissions into the atmosphere leading to global warming • Ghana Standards Authority and the Environmental Protection Agency are responsible for regulations about laws within the industry.

Political Factors

Ghana's private sector has become an integral factor in the country's economy. One of the main goals of the New Patriotic Party, under the auspices of the incumbent president, Nana Akuffo Addo is to revive the private sector and make it more attractive for entrepreneurs and non-governmental organisations. In his speech at two different rallies, he explained that he would do that by first subsidising Value Added Taxes on Small and Medium Enterprises from the country's current 17.5% to 3%; Fast food chains being a part of the beneficiary parties (Kwawukume, 2016). Coupled with Ghana's reputation for political stability since 1992 (BBC, 2016), this is a lucrative time for the fast food industry of which Munchies is a part of.

In the 2018 national budget, the minister of Finance, Mr. Ken Ofori-Atta made known to the general public, the government's tax initiative for entrepreneurs under 35, where they will not be obligated to pay taxes for the first five years of the company's operations. This tax concession is to encourage innovation and boost employment as part of the National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Plan (NEIP). This tax initiative is directed at beneficiaries based on the number of employees (Arku, 2017). A young entrepreneur such as Mr. Bempah can take advantage of this initiative by the government.

Economic Factors

Ghana's Gross Domestic Product as of 2016, was at 3.5%. The lowest it has been in two decades at the time. Since 2017 however, the economy has made a substantial recovery to about 6.3% (African Development Bank Group, 2016). The beginning of 2018 saw an unexpected fall in Ghana's GDP to an abysmal 8.1% since its all-time high of 9.7% in 2017. The fall, according to the Ghana statistical service

was due to a drop in construction and the slowdown of mining among other reasons (Ghana Statistical Service, 2018).

Competition in the Ghanaian fast food industry can also determine profitability within the industry. The incumbent players in the fast food industry, some of whom include; Papaye Fast Food, one of Ghana's first fast food franchises, KFC, Pizza Inn, Marwako, to name a few, hold a large market share within the larger fast food industry.

Social Factors

Socio-cultural factors like lifestyles and trends, demographic factors such as distributions of wealth and population sizes affect the fast food industry in diverse ways. The typical Ghanaian diet since the early post-independence period consisted of large quantities of staple carbohydrates such as maize, yam, plantain and most importantly rice (Nyanteng, 1987). Rice, is a key item in the fast food business, being the main ingredient in making fried rice, a popular item on the menus of many Ghanaian fast-food firms. In a study conducted in 2013 on characteristics, availability and other cuisine concepts about the fast food industry in Greater Accra, the study showed that 92% of restaurants offered fried rice.

Additionally, 81% of them offered French fries, 74% sold fried chicken and 42%, and 31% sold burgers and pizza respectively (Omari, Jongerden, Essegbey, Frempong, & Ruivenkamp, 2013). Ghanaians' taste for foreign goods, especially food items has risen substantially in the past 20 years. There has been a prestigious affiliation to foods like pizzas, burgers, French fries and other non-Ghanaian meals which are often commonly found on the menus of fast food restaurants.

Technology Factors

The fast-food industry has come a long way in terms of innovation. Whereas once upon a time the concept of “fast food” in itself was an innovation, fast forward to the digital age where with just the click of a button, your food could be delivered to your doorstep (Lorenz, 2018). In the 21st century, technology is a key element pertaining to business operations. Technology helps both the firms and the consumers in diverse ways; it has not only simplified the supply chain for the firms but has also made the stages of customer interactions relatively seamless. From convenient payment options to rapid ordering platforms, the fast food industry is making great strides in terms of technology. In the fast food industry, technology is used to record data about the industry, it is also used in Point of Sales services, and other convenient options for the customer such as browsing products, ordering and making payments, to name a few. Fast food franchises like Papaye, Marwako, KFC and the likes within the Greater Accra Region have made use of such technology within their operations. Munchies can tap into this innovative space in numerous ways. From as little as inculcating mobile money payments to as bold as creating a mobile app for the Ashesi community to patronise. Another innovation worth mentioning within the fast food industry within Greater Accra is the emergence of drive-throughs. This innovation was brought to Accra by the KFC franchise. Drive-throughs not only allow customers the convenience of sitting in their cars and ordering food but also serves them at even faster rates than the conventional “fast food” rates, thus revolutionizing waiting time. This innovation poses as an opportunity for efficiency and increased satisfaction to the customers that Munchies can take advantage off.

Legal Factors

With regards to the food industry, there are numerous factors that Munchies would have to consider. There are several legal constraints that a firm must overcome to set up a legitimate food vending organisation. Laws pertaining to standards of ingredients used in the preparation of these foods, advertising or lack thereof, of what the food consists of and its suitability for human consumption. Even details as minute as the fortification of the salt used to cook the meals must meet the required standards of the law. Offenders who have failed to meet these standards are faced with harsh punishments, some of which include; “imprisonment, not exceeding two years...”, “fines not exceeding five hundred penalty units...” among others (Food and Drugs Authority [FDA], 1992).

Setting up a business in Ghana requires the owner to secure specific documentation and certification. Including a license from the Metropolitan Authority, and an environmental certificate from the Environmental Protection Agency, one also needs a tax identification number (The World Bank, 2017). Seeing as Munchies is operating under such strict constraints of the law, they must endeavour to abide by the laws being enforced within the industry.

Environmental Factors

Sustainability is a growing issue within the environmental discussions in the 21st Century. It can be defined as the process of avoiding the depletion of natural resources to maintain an ecological balance. Stakeholders within the industry such as the Environmental Protection Agency in collaboration with the Ghana Standards Board and the Food and Drugs Authority are responsible for the regulations relating to consumption of food within the industry. Fast food contains harmful substances that affect not only our health but also the environment. Flavouring agents,

preservatives and even traces of pesticides are used in the large-scale preparation and manufacturing of certain fast foods. The mass production of animals which are then processed causing harmful emissions into the atmosphere are ways that the fast food industry negatively affects the environment. In Ghana, open grills and charcoal flames are common associations with fast food and roadside vendors. These devices greatly affects the ozone layer, however, there are very few statutory laws in Ghana which serve as checks to curb such practices. In situations where there are laws to regulate these practices, bureaucracy, conventions, and corruption have masked them. Munchies has a moral duty to minimize greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere in order to play its role on the topic of sustainability.

1.3 Internal Organizational Content

1.3.1 Company Profile

Munchies is a Ghanaian fast-food company started by Daniel Kwaku Bempah in 2016, while at Ashesi University College, now Ashesi University. From a menu which originally consisted solely of kebabs, burgers and grilled chicken, Munchies has included a variety of other dishes and offering onto their menu. As a young minded entrepreneur, Daniel Bempah saw a business opportunity in the fact that there was no affordable food on the Ashesi hill after the two main cafeterias- Akornor and Big Ben, had closed. Capitalising on that problem, Mr. Bempah and some colleagues of his, who are no longer shareholders in the business begun selling kebab and chicken after working hours and at school functions. Mr. Bempah stated that as a student, it was difficult getting delicious food on the Ashesi campus and from the remote environs of the school's location, owing to this, he created his business to

solve this identified problem. A venture, which would provide the kind of service they wished for other university students (Akpalikoko, 2017).

The company currently has six workers whose functions range from preparing food, taking orders, and making deliveries and run shifts in groups of three. Munchies also offers catering services to its customers and processes bulk orders upon prior request.

Their short-term goals include owning and working out of a portable food truck which is an innovative space within the fast food industry that they intend to tap into. Another short-term goal is to increase their profits consistently at the end of each quarter, this will be done by attracting more customers, further structuring their operations and investing in marketing strategies to get, keep and grow their customer base. Munchies within the next year aims at redesigning their menu to offer even more to their customers based on customer feedback. Lastly, it is part of their short-term goal to inculcate a bar and grill into their operations and revenue stream.

Munchies' long-term goal is to tap into the region-wide tertiary institutional fast food industry by opening branches of their services at Central University, then Academic City College, in that order. In effect, Munchies will also increase their employee base as the company expands its reach. Daniel Kwaku Bempah is the founder and currently the CEO of Munchies.

Mission

To provide superior quality local fast-food at 'street food' prices

Vision

Munchies aspires to dominate Ghana's street food, and pub culture in all urban spaces, especially university campuses by creating the first Ghanaian owned fast food franchise

1.4 Market Analysis

To further understand the customers and immediate environment of Munchies, a more in-depth analysis of the market must be looked at. This section of the paper reveals a market analysis using Michael Porter's Five Forces analysis. The aim of this is to do five main things; Study the threat of new entrants into the market, the rivalry that occurs between existing competitors, the bargaining power of both the suppliers and the buyers, and finally the threat of substitute products and services within the market. In essence, this section of the paper will assess the overall market profitability and factors that Munchies could consider regarding competition within the market.

Information about the market was collated using various research techniques. Daily interactions within the market, as well as interviews with key stakeholders and observation of day-to-day processes are the methods which were used in gathering the necessary information to analyse the market. Due to the stake I have in the market, purposely removing biases was paramount to getting objective data about the market. These biases were lessened by employing various research techniques, as opposed to relying on knowledge gathered while being immersed in the market over time.

Currently, Munchies' target market is the Ashesi University community. This includes, but is not exclusive to students, lecturers, staff and faculty. Secondary buyers such as families of Ashesi students, visitors to the campus and friends of students and employees of businesses in and around the Ashesi community are also a part of the customer segments of Munchies.

1.4.1 Threat of New Entrants

The barriers to entry within the Ashesi community can be classified into two main segments based on location; On-campus and Off-campus. Barriers to entry on the Ashesi campus are high, governed by strict laws and a duopoly supported by the

school administration. Off-campus restrictions, however, are a lot easier to get around, thus lowering some of these barriers. There are no statutory laws which govern the emergence of food businesses both on and off-campus, making it generally easy for new food businesses to emerge. Even though getting a permanent setup On-campus requires rigorous appeals and large capital, vendors can set up anywhere Off-campus.

Food vendors have been able to overcome the capital requirements needed to set up a permanent physical location. Most new firms that spring up are student-owned businesses. Therefore students can sell out of their rooms, and costs such as utility bills, certain operational costs and other fixed costs can be pushed to either their parents or hostel management. This makes it relatively easy for new firms to enter the market.

1.4.2 Rivalry among existing competitors

The rivalry among competitors is high. The three well-known firms within the market are Akornor, Big Ben and the food vendor at Charlotte Hostel. Some of these firms have the backing of the school and the largest market share. Relative to the other competitors within the market such as the indomie lady on the Dufie Hostel junction, the numerous student-owned companies and Munchies itself, who have no official backing by the school and arguably lack the convenience of location. In a situation where one of these new food vending start-ups was to pick up steam within the market, incumbent firms can retaliate by lowering prices or offering more attractive deals to the customers just to drive the upcoming firms out of business.

1.4.3 Bargaining Power of Suppliers

Suppliers within this market range from landowners, and employees, suppliers of transportation to this remote location and so on. Landowners and other suppliers of

transportation do not depend on the food market for their revenue. Therefore, they have the power to dictate prices and industry participants must obey. Alternatively, with regards to labour, the Berekuso Township provides a large quantity of possible labour to the market, owing to this, the concentration of firms in the industry relative to the large quantity of possible labour is high, and power lies with the market.

The market has numerous suppliers of various input in the production process. These suppliers range from large-scale providers who usually supply to the duopoly on campus; Akornor and Big Ben, to the taxi drivers and farmers in the Berekuso community who supply to the smaller food vendors in the Ashesi community; such as the lady who sells indomie at the Dufie Hostel junction. There are high costs associated with the transportation of goods from supplier to firm, and this transfers a considerable amount of bargaining power to the suppliers because of the costs that are incurred when supplying resources.

1.4.4 Bargaining Power of Buyers

In most tertiary institutions customers who consist of young university students trying to save what little money they have, are usually price sensitive. They try to look for cheaper alternatives for the things they need. However, at Ashesi where there are fewer options to choose from it tends to restrict the power of these buyers. For some, switching costs include having to walk from an on-campus hostel to the Munchies' stand if one is not willing to pay for delivery. The concentration of firms relative to the large Ashesi community population causes firms to dictate prices and takes away power from the buyers. However, the food market at Ashesi is an emerging one with low barriers to entry, so that might change soon.

1.4.5 Threat of Substitute Products and Service

Substitutes are products or services which provide a similar satisfaction for a specific need. Substitutes to the services provided by Munchies include food sold at Akornor, Big Ben and Essentials. The bread and egg and noodle dishes sold by the road side, the various student-owned food services; Nakoh's lollipop chicken and various rice dishes, Lisa's pancakes, Shishiiishi, just to name a few. However, the giants in the market are Akornor and Big Ben. Factors such as switching cost and when a substitute can offer a better price-performance ratio i.e. a relatively higher value for relatively the same amount of money are threats to Munchies.

Other substitute goods include the snacks sold at Essentials supermarket. The convenience of the store, moderate pricing, an allowance to purchase on credit and the ability to make payments with Ashesi's payment plan all increase the chances of customers switching to that. However, customers require proper meals in a day, so the likelihood of a customer entirely switching to that is very low.

1.5 SWOT Analysis

This section of the project elaborates on the strength and weaknesses which closely pertain to the company. It also describes the opportunities that Munchies can take advantage of and the threats they can overcome. Information for the SWOT was gathered from the following sources and synthesized:

- An in-depth interview with the CEO, Daniel Bempah about the company
- Observations drawn from the PESTLE analysis
- Insights from the Porter's Five Forces Analysis
- Findings from the needs assessment

Table 2 SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insider knowledge • Customer goodwill • Delivery • Convenient location for students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No permanent structure • Limited access to utilities • No intentional marketing efforts • Low employee retention • Overutilization of available human resource.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheap labour • Institutional orders • Cater Ashesi events • Increase in population size • Business expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land issues • Low barriers to entry, budding market, new competition springing up

1.5.1 Strengths

Since the owner of Munchies is an alum and is currently working at Ashesi, he has first-hand knowledge about his target market, their needs and how to satisfy them; having been in their situation not too long ago. Another strength that the company derives from the owner's association with the school the goodwill of customers; staff and students alike show support for the student-owned business.

Munchies has been able to differentiate their services by offering delivery services to its customers. Even though their competitors Big Ben were the first to introduce this innovation within the market, the customer segment that service is catered to is Staff and Faculty. Munchies has capitalised on that and makes deliveries to both Staff and Students.

1.5.2 Weaknesses

One major weakness of Munchies is the issue of not having a permanent structure to work out of. Even though the current location is convenient, landlords and landowners can disturb the current situation by claiming encroachment allegations. Another weakness which Munchies must overcome within its internal operations is the lack of electricity. In the night time, the employees make use of torches and lamps which is not particularly efficient in the food vending business. They also have to use nearby pumps to get access to water, because they have no immediate access to running water. For any food vendor, water is imperative to the general and fundamental operations of the business such as cooking and cleaning.

Munchies currently has six employees, who all have shared responsibilities. In situations where some of the employees do not show up for work, a large chunk of the tasks fall on the ones who do. Generally, the overutilization of the workers creates a disincentive for them to work effectively.

Lastly, even though the company has made great strides in proper planning and operational strategies, Munchies has no properly documented strategy to grow and keep customers or create and capture value within the market. Having a carefully thought out plan of action for acquiring market share would be greatly beneficial to the company.

1.5.3 Opportunities

In the fast food industry, there are various opportunities which can be exploited. For Munchies, one of such opportunities is the cheap labour supplied from the Berekuso community. Owing to the relatively low standard of living within the community, it is easy to get employees to do work at relatively lower rates than in the capital city Accra. Another opportunity which can be leveraged on is bulk orders.

Combined with the proximity to the school, the variety in food options available and the goodwill of the clients, Ashesi University could be a resource to be tapped. One of the services Munchies offers are catering services, therefore, elements like institutional orders and bulk purchases are keys to success and gaining market share.

Lastly, the Ashesi community is currently at its largest yet. Currently serving a population of about 1000 people, this serves as a huge opportunity for Munchies to get, grown and keep customers in this ever-booming market. It also hammers on the need for Munchies to differentiate and distinguish itself using some form of competitive strategy.

1.5.4 Threats

In terms of threats, the uncertainty that comes with perching on land which is not yours can be crippling. Munchies does not own the land, and because of this, there is a possibility that at any time, the business would be forced to find a new and more permanent location. Legal implications like land encroachment must also be considered.

Also, because of the market Munchies sells for, and as demonstrated in the Five Forces analysis of the market, we see that there are low barriers to entry. What this means is that new firms and new competition can spring up at any time. Especially in a budding market such as Ashesi, with its increasing population, a major threat to Munchies would be new competition for market share.

CHAPTER 2: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter seeks to outline the gaps within the processes, operations and business strategies within Munchies through extensive research into these areas.

According to McCawley (2009), a needs assessment is necessary to study the state of knowledge, ability, interest or attitude of the operations and businesses processes of a company using a systematic approach. This chapter accurately identifies the current state of affairs within Munchies.

The main objectives of the needs assessment are to:

1. Analyse the day-to-day operations of Munchies to find gaps in terms of customer satisfaction.
2. Perform a comparative analysis between the customer satisfaction abilities of Munchies and its leading competitors.
3. Study the buying behaviour of the Ashesi community, to make accurate deductions and recommendations for Munchies.

By following these objectives, an appropriate diagnosis can be made to recommend a solution for Munchies.

2.2 Problem Statement

Munchies, since it began its operations in 2016 has not had a structured marketing approach to target customers and improve customer satisfaction. Customers complain of long waiting times and inconsistency in the taste and quality of their food.

Munchies is currently the third most preferred food vendor at Ashesi. However, their unprofessional staff, coupled with the above-mentioned problems puts them at risk of losing market share if their quality of service is not improved.

2.3 Methodology

This segment of the project focuses on the methods used for conducting the needs assessment, the rationale behind the choice of methods and how the information was analysed. Primary research will be used to get first-hand information from both the company and their customers. In order to get holistic insight, a mixed method approach will be used to gather qualitative and quantitative data.

2.3.1 Primary Research

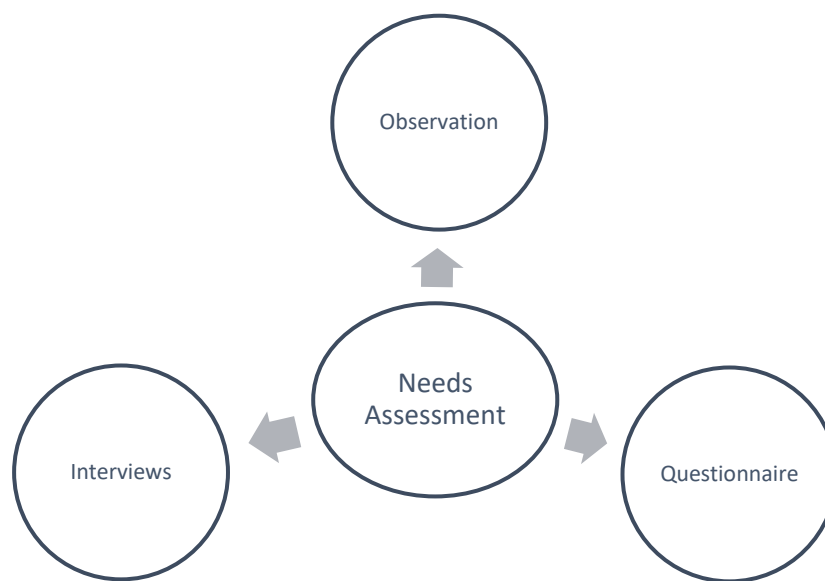


Figure 1 Needs Assessment Methodology

Observation

The first data collection method adopted for the needs assessment of Munchies was observation. The objective of this was to study specific details of Munchies, as well as its competitors in the market. Some of these details included their general operations, customer service, and customer waiting time. The trade-off between observation and interviews as data collection techniques is the reliance on researcher perception and participant perception respectively (Vanderstoep and Johnston, 2009). In order to not be constrained by this trade-off, both approaches were used. The naturalist observation method, where participants are studied in their natural setting

without fore-warning, allowed me to get a sense of what the current state of the market is like in terms of the aforementioned factors. Individual waiting time for 40 customers, and 20 customers who called to place orders was recorded, over the span of one week.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews with the use of interview guides were conducted with the owner of Munchies, Daniel Bempah, as well as two of his employees. The interview followed an outline of questions which facilitated the interview. When using an interview guide, the researcher is required to use, but not limited to the questions they have set. This gives room for improvisation based on the responses of the participants. Owing to this, the researcher is not constrained by the questions set when unplanned responses are given by the respondent. The guides used for the interviews can be found in the appendix of this paper (*Figures 11 & 12*).

Descriptive open-ended questions were used to get more evocative responses. This method was chosen because of the small sample size, and the detailed information that would be obtained from the participants.

Unstructured interviews which followed a conversational approach was selected to better relate with 40 of Munchies customers. The researcher gave customers the impression of general research rather than explicitly stating Munchies' stake in the study. This was done in order to get an unbiased response from customers. Unstructured interviews are more flexible, and better allow for handling unanticipated responses. They also allow the researcher to adapt and make changes to a planned interview schedule. A drawback to this approach is that analysing the qualitative data collected may prove difficult when trying to find common themes. In

order to avert this drawback, an interview schedule (aide memoir) was used to ensure consistency and better facilitate thematic analysis (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009).

Questionnaire

A questionnaire issued to Ashesi students (a segment of Munchies' target market), was the final data collection tool. This was administered in order to gather quantitative data and some qualitative data. The questionnaire helped test assumptions about the market that were made from observations, and issues that were brought to light during the interviews. In terms of the type of questionnaire used, a self-administered questionnaire enabled participants to complete the questionnaire without coercion and minimised bias, making it the most suitable type for the study (Jones, Baxter, & Khanduja, 2013). It was distributed and made available to the market by mail.

Due to the natural stratification of the Ashesi community, the questionnaire was administered to the entire student population, however even though the optimal number of respondents was 300 students, only 130 students responded to the questionnaire.

All three primary research methods were employed to eliminate all biases. All methods of data collection complimented one another's strengths and balanced out shortcomings as stated above.

2.4 Key Findings

2.4.1 Interview Findings – Munchies owner and Munchies employees

Business operations

Mr. Bempah does a daily sweep of the kitchen, and some of the things he looks out for include the general cleanliness of the area, how well his employees are following the systems put in place for them as well as the sales they make. Munchies

currently has no formal second-in-command, so Mr. Bempah is responsible for converting all data into digital information and other digital inventory management. In a situation where he is unavailable, he anticipates Munchies would survive for about a month before the quality of services would dwindle significantly. What this means is that the company is heavily dependent on his supervision. He dedicates his weekends to procuring resources for Munchies for the coming week.

The company has no permanent structure, owing to this, their temporary structure currently lacks utilities such as running water and electricity. The improper lighting of the cooking area is a huge factor that affects the company's day-to-day operations. Their lack of running water also slows down operations as they have to go great lengths to fetch water.

The owner also expressed that due to the type of market the company is targeting, any marketing strategy must be directed at helping the company differentiate in some way or form. What he hopes to gain from this project is increased profit, more in-depth and credible market knowledge, as well as increased market share within the Ashesi food vending market.

Employee factors

The employees explained that the pressures of working with Munchies are extremely demanding, especially the difficulties associated with working with Mr. Bempah. They feel unappreciated for their efforts, and disrespected by how he addresses them sometimes. The company's employee retention is very poor and retraining of new staff and the overutilization of the available human resources are common results associated with that.

The difficulties working with Mr. Bempah that were mentioned in the findings can result to poor employee motivation. This lack of motivation can easily affect the

quality of service that the employees put out. It may reflect in their work ethic, customer interactions and the output of their labour- the food sold. Possible recommendations for this include giving the workers more incentives, improving employer-employee relations and even frequent feedback solicitation from the workers.

Some other key insights that the owner shared with me included the lack of employee loyalty. He tries to rectify this by aligning the company's objectives and resources with the employees' interests and needs. He also tries not to micromanage their duties and gives them a level of autonomy.

Interview guides used during the interviews for the CEO and then manager can be found in the appendix (*Figures 11 & 12*)

2.4.2 Interview Findings - Customers

As stated above, the objectives of the study were to analyse the day-to-day operations of Munchies to find gaps in terms of customer satisfaction, perform a comparative analysis between the customer satisfaction abilities of Munchies and its leading competitors and study the buying behaviour of the Ashesi community, in order to make accurate deductions and recommendations for Munchies.

Interviews with 40 students divulged that students have very little variety when it comes to food offerings in and around the Ashesi campus. Certain factors frequently run through the response, and to determine that the responses were representative of the Ashesi market, a questionnaire was issued to confirm some of the responses and test hypothesis made based on those responses. Some of these factors included features of food vendor services that make up customer satisfaction like waiting time, quality of food and convenience of location. Information like the pain points of customers, and how food vendors could improve were also solicited in

the questionnaires. The questionnaire was issued to the entire student body and selected staff and faculty at Ashesi University, however, 130 responses were collated.

Buyer Behaviour

Over 70% of respondents consider a proper meal to be a “balanced diet”, one that contained the essential food nutrients; carbohydrates, proteins and vitamins. 51.3% of the respondents reported that on average, they eat a proper meal twice a day. 43.7% of the respondents spend between GHS 10 – GHS 15 per proper meal. It was realized that the most important factor in terms of determining how much one would pay for food was “Quality and taste”, with respondents attributing major significance to it.

65.6% of the respondents are on Ashesi’s meal plan, however, 42.9% of them use it exclusively to buy food at Ashesi. During the interviews, customers expressed the desire for Munchies to accept meal plan payments. From the questionnaire, 50.9% of respondents who do not buy from Munchies gave the inability to use their meal plan to pay as the reason for not buying from them. Some interviewed students expressed the same dilemma.

Even though 65% of the respondents buy food from Munchies, only 12.6% consider it their most preferred food vendor.

Insights About the Market

Within the Ashesi market, Big Ben is the preferred food vendor of choice at Ashesi, with Akornor following closely. These two food vendors own over 50% of combined market share. Even though Munchies is a relatively new food vendor within the Ashesi market, it stands as the third most preferred food vendor. Akornor and Big Ben are school cafeterias with resources and infrastructure as well as backing by the Ashesi administration, hence the members of the Ashesi community can make

payments with their meal plan cards. Munchies, however, is in direct competition with food vendors such as Lambert Court, Charlotte food and the indomie sold at the Dufie junction. Munchies is currently the third most preferred food vendor at Ashesi, however, Big Ben and Akornor are preferred because of their convenience of location, affordability, and mode of payment options.

2.5 Analysis

2.5.1 Perceptual Maps

Perceptual maps are used to show how brands are perceived within a general market and are plotted along two or three product attributes or customer satisfaction variables. Perceptual maps were used in the analysis of the data collected about the market to get an idea of customer perceptions using relevant variables gathered from market research (Nielson, 2014).

The perceptual maps were also used in line with the objective of comparing Munchies' customer satisfaction ability with that of its competitors'. The variables used for the maps were waiting time, taste and quality of food, location/distance and finally price. A combination of primary and secondary research on customer satisfaction data was used to generate the variables used.

The various variables were plotted on the X-axis and Y-axis, while the size of the ball representing each food vendor was in terms of market preferences based on data from the questionnaire, and interviews and observation discoveries. There are three way of analysing perceptual maps, namely value analysis, competitive analysis and innovation opportunity analysis. A value analysis was used to analyse and interpret the maps

Value analysis

This form of analysis makes deductions on perceived value. Customers process vast amounts of information about products, and over time form a repertoire of perceptions of prices. Customers use these repertoires to take shortcuts in decision-making when buying products or paying for services. They form “schemas” which influence their willingness to pay for goods. These schemas are what marketer refer to as the “price-quality schema” (Peterson & Wilson, 1985). Some customers associate higher quality with higher prices, whereas others attribute increased value to higher prices.

Price VS Distance/Location

Customers are often more inclined to spend more based on benefits or premiums; therefore the trade-off between the distance of getting food and the amount of money one is willing to spend is negatively correlated. The further away the food vendor, the less likely it is for a customer to buy from them. Owing to that, food vendors in convenient locations are given the opportunity to set prices slightly higher than average pricing because of the convenience they are offering their clients.

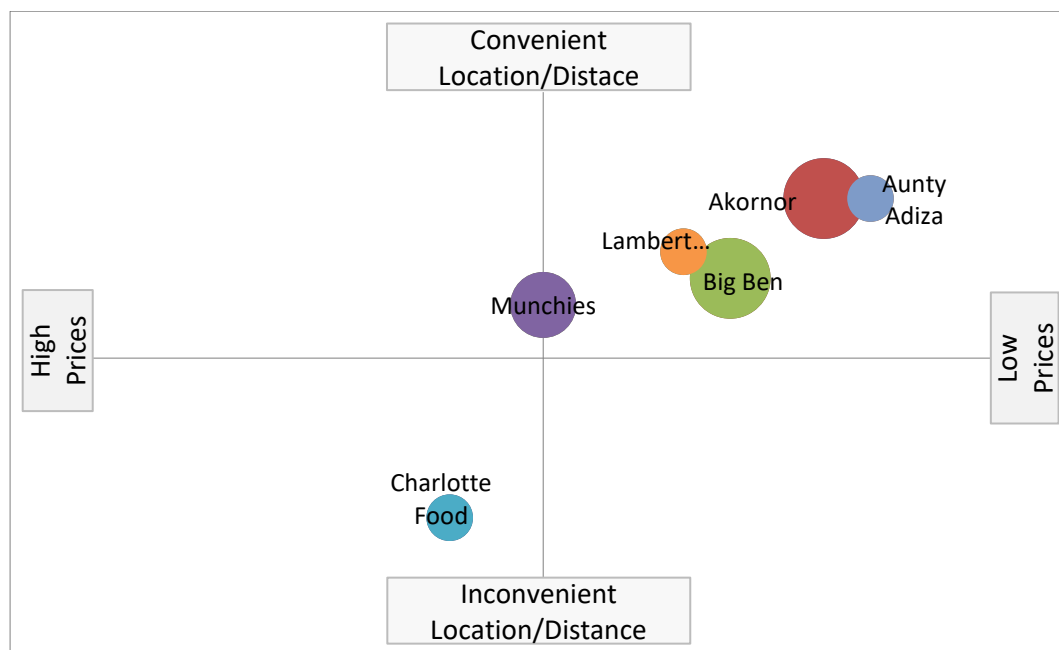


Figure 2

In the price and location comparison, the top right quadrant is the ideal spot for food vendors looking to improve customer satisfaction. This quadrant depicts prices that customers are willing to pay and a convenient location that has a short distance for customers to get food. The diagram above shows the food vendors who fall within that quadrant. Customers of Munchies appreciate it's slightly higher prices because of the value that they perceive it offers in their product, i.e. the unique taste of their chicken. This explains its position on the map, and this was deduced from information gathered in the primary research. In terms of its location, a majority of Munchies' customers are students who stay off-campus, owing to this, it is relatively convenient to buy from them. In addition, their delivery services mitigate the distance for customers on-campus; both faculty and students

Waiting time VS Location/Distance

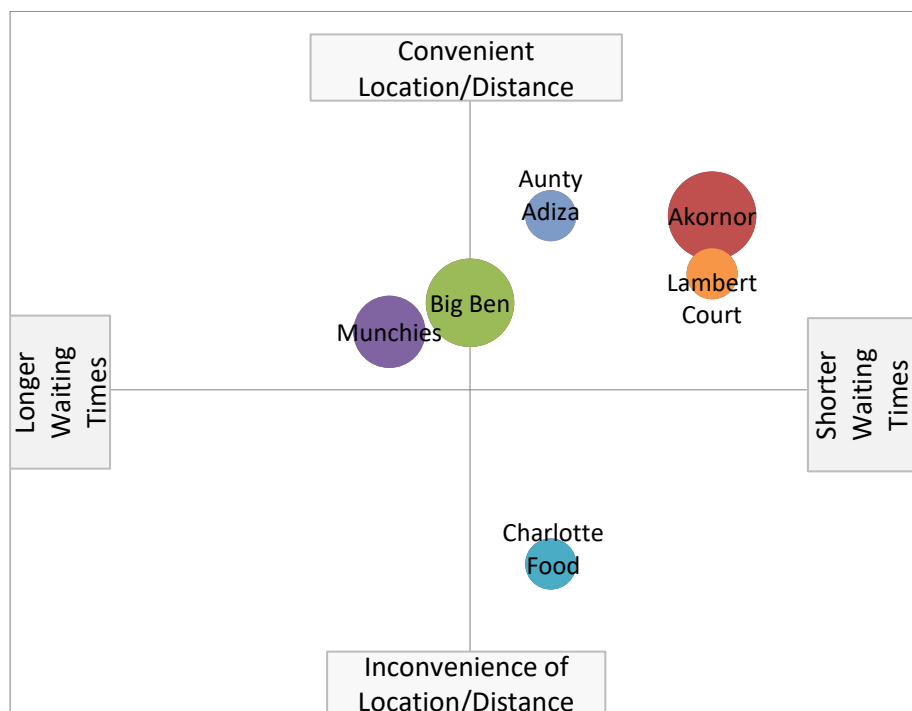


Figure 3

With regards to the map above, even though the best performing and the worst performing, Akornor and Lambert Court respectively, serve seemingly different

segments, their core businesses remain the same - providing food to members of the Ashesi community. Based on insights from primary research, Akornor and Lambert Court provide food at similar rates; however Akornor has the upper hand in terms of its location and accessibility. Munchies performs poorly with regards to the customer waiting time, however, when speaking about location convenience, improvements are required as the general performance is only regarded as fair. The ideal region for this comparison is the top right quadrant, where waiting time is kept to a minimum and the accessibility of the food is seamless.

Other perceptual maps can be found in the appendix (*Figures 13 & 14*). In these comparisons, it is seen that areas Munchies should focus on improving their customer waiting time as well as keeping consistency in the quality of their food. Compared to industry leader Akornor, who have been able to mitigate their shortcomings with good price-quality ratios and offerings, Munchies would benefit from a solution which would enable them to either rectify their poor performances in waiting time and consistency in food quality or provide alternative customer satisfaction enhancers like reduced prices. However, the latter would be detrimental to Munchies, seeing as merely reducing their cost would be detrimental to the business.

2.5.2 Synthesis of Key Problems Identified

Table 3

Issue	Frequency	Effects	Severity
Long waiting times	Seven in every ten Munchies' customers complain about how long they have to wait for their meals, especially in the evenings.	Positive customer perception of the firm, as well as customer satisfaction decreased	Customers have withdrawn orders and this has reduced their customer retention ability

Employee retention	Over the course of one year, Munchies has replaced four employees and added three new workers to their employee base	The time it takes to train new employees slows down operations Recipes are not kept consistent, so there are inconsistencies in the taste of the food	Leads to inconsistencies in the taste of the food. Customers cannot rely on the taste of the food
Lack of consistency in the taste and quality of the food	Three in every five of Munchies' customers have complained of occasionally poor quality of the food Munchies serves	Some customers have complained of the food giving them upset stomachs	Some customers have stopped buying from Munchies
Poor queue/Order Management	On a daily basis, Munchies employees prioritize storefront orders over phone-in-orders	Lower customer service ratings	Customers have withdrawn orders, owing to this, it has reduced their customer retention ability

Despite the various issues realized within Munchies, the needs assessment divulged the following factors as what customers within the Ashesi market equate to satisfaction. Waiting Time, consistency in taste and quality of food and good customer service.

Additionally, in order to improve the quality of service that Munchies provides to its customer, improved customer service, employee professionalism and more efficient order and queue management should be effected on the business' side.

2.5.3 Ishikawa Diagram

The Ishikawa diagram, also known as the Fishbone diagram depicts the causes of specific events. It serves as a visualization tool for categorizing problems. It also

aids in identifying the root causes of these problems. The head of the fish contains the issue studied.

A key benefit of the Ishikawa diagram is its ability to prioritise further analysis into a problem and determine the root cause of it. Some drawbacks of the Ishikawa diagram are the potential of deviating from the main objective and the fact that the diagram is based on the researchers understanding of the information gathered (Usmani, 2015).

In this section, the Ishikawa diagram was used as an analysis tool to give a more visual representation to the problems identified within Munchies. The purpose of this is to show a clear interrelation among the problems

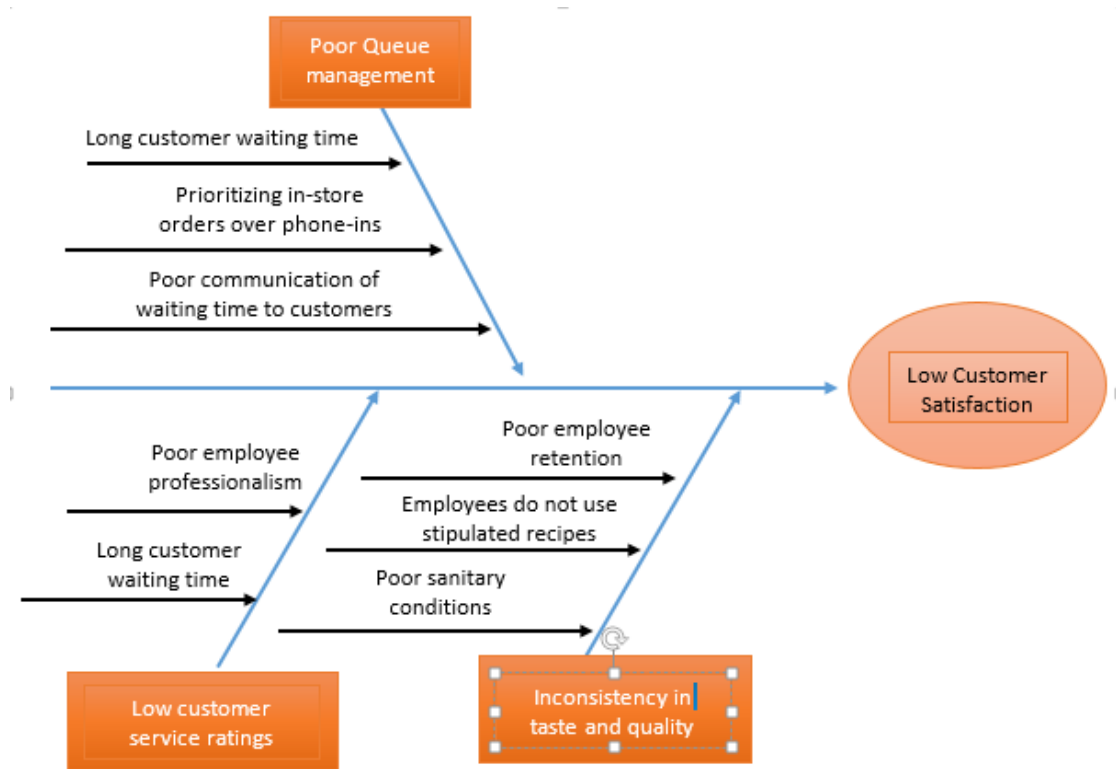


Figure 4

2.6 Justification

The needs assessment exposed the need for Munchies to improve their products and services, specifically the parts of it that directly influence their customers' satisfaction. The needs assessment also brought to light the need for Munchies to clearly stipulate their service quality so as to differentiate itself within the Ashesi market. The project seeks to offer a solution that will improve their customer satisfaction abilities by rectifying the quality of products and services they offer.

A structured marketing plan is an efficient and sustainable way to align a company's resources with their marketing objectives within a stipulated time frame, thus enabling business growth. It also serves as a blueprint for improving customer satisfaction and setting guidelines to improve service quality.

CHAPTER 3: MASTERY OF SUBJECT MATTER

3.1 Chapter Overview

Now that the problems that Munchies faces have been clearly defined, this chapter aims to provide a better understanding of service quality and the role it plays in the fast food industry, and finally how it will enable the management of Munchies to make informed decisions to enhance customer satisfaction. This will be done through a literature review of articles and publications on the fast food industry, service quality and the role it plays in providing customer satisfaction.

3.2 Fast Food Industry

The fast food industry is characterized by restaurants that have two or more characteristics, namely, “expedited food service, take-away and/or table service, counter service, limited waiting or service staff, low price and payment tendered prior to receiving food” (Omari, Jongerden, Essegbey, Frempong, & Ruivenkamp, 2013; Jason, Scribner, DeSalvo, 2004). In terms of the techniques used to prepare food and the distinct flavour principles in the Ghanaian market, stir-frying and grilling have become increasingly popular. About 30% of Ghanaian consumers of fast food describe fast food as fried rice, other consumers characterise “quickly, crispy, tasty, easily carried out and easily eaten with fingers while multitasking” (Omari et al., 2013). Pepper sauce, commonly known as “Shito”, is another key item in the characteristics of fast food in Ghana. Eaten with a variety of foods, such as waakye, yam, rice and indomie, Ghanaians like their food hot and spicy.

According to a study by Omari et al., (2013), fast food is evaluated as good or bad based on characteristics such the type of food, the nutritional cost and associating benefits and finally how long it takes to get the food. Similar to the larger Ghanaian fast food market, the two most important factors for evaluating food vendors within

the Ashesi market are “Consistency in taste/quality of food”, and “waiting time”.

These are two areas that Munchies needs to improve on. Out of 130 respondents, only 30 customers testified to be satisfied with the waiting time at Munchies’.

3.3 Problems Identified and relevance of the Project

Parasuraman et al. (1988), defined service quality as “an assessment of customers from the overall excellence of services” and according to Brady and Cronin (2001), the theory of service quality was propounded on the basis of product quality and customer satisfaction. Per service marketing literature, as much as acquiring new customers can increase the firm’s profits, a more significant approach is by keeping the current customer base satisfied (Ghotbabadi, Feiz, Baharun, 2015). In the words of Sang Long and Khalafinezhad (2012), “a loyal customer plays a role as a free advertiser for every organisation”, and this is the aim of customer relationship management; to get, keep and grow customer satisfaction and breed customer loyalty. Satisfied customers are assets to an organisation. Through repeat buys and recommendations, they ensure long-term profitability amongst competition. In contrast, unhappy customers turn to competitors and give negative reports about the organisation in question. In a generation where social media is prevalent, these negative messages can be very harmful to the organisation (Cravens & Piercy, 2012).

3.4 Customer Satisfaction and Service Quality

“Quality and customer satisfaction have long been recognised as playing a crucial role in success and survival in today’s competitive market” (Mansor et al., 2012). Within service marketing literature and debates, there is always an interdependence between service quality and customer satisfaction.

According to Brady and Cronin (2001), service quality was established on the basis of the Disconfirmation Paradigm, also known as the Expectancy-

Disconfirmation Theory. This theory explains that customer satisfaction with a target product or service is based on a subjective juxtaposition between customers' expectation and the customers' perception. Though this may seem very similar to the underlying principles of the Nordic model and the SERVQUAL model, the Disconfirmation Paradigm aims to theorize a consumption process whereas the service quality models merely describe perceived service quality at any given time (Brady & Cronin, 2001).

Secondly, the Disconfirmation Paradigm operates with customer satisfaction as its fundamental criterion variable while other service quality models have quality of service as theirs. Even though no unanimous decision has been made by researchers on the most suitable model for measuring service quality, scholars and practitioners alike have come to a consensus on the paramount role that service quality has on "customer satisfaction, loyalty and repurchase intentions" (Ghotbabadi et al., 2015).

3.5 Service Quality Models

This section highlights the most widely used models within the field of service quality measurement. Their advantages and shortcomings are evaluated in order to point out the most suitable model for the fast food industry which Munchies' operates in within the Ashesi market.

3.5.1 SERVQUAL Model

SERVQUAL is arguably the most popular framework in service marketing literature. It is a service quality measurement analytical tool which can help managers find gaps in their organizations. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) sought to mitigate the flaws identified in the Nordic model by introducing an alternative way to measure service quality. The model uses five dimensions to measure and analyze

service quality, namely, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility. Also known as the “GAP Analysis”, the SERVQUAL model is often used to expose shortcomings in the services of a company. It does this by comparing the expected service quality and the service quality experienced by the customer. Factors of grave importance include organizations’ internal communication, as well as communication between the customers and the organization. The SERVQUAL model identifies five gaps that may arise when customers’ needs and the service a company offers do not meet. Namely, reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance and tangible.

Rebuttals and criticisms to this model believe that expected quality of service need not be studied however the performance of the organization is the most crucial aspect (Cronin & Taylor, 1992). Studies by Dabholkar, Thorpe and Rentz (1996), have also shown inconsistencies in the SERVQUAL model.

B: The SERVQUAL Model
(Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry 1988)

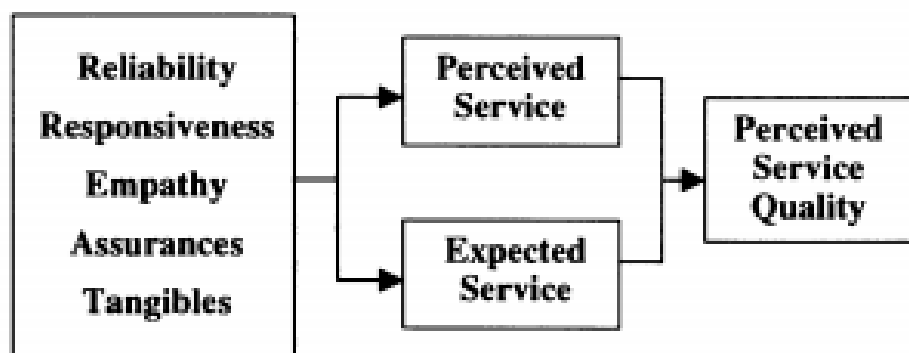


Figure 5 The SERVQUAL Model

Source: (Brady & Cronin, 2001)

3.5.2 Hierarchical Service Quality Model

The hierarchical approach is a model in service marketing literature which combines four models in the same field and was propounded by Michael Brady and

Joseph Cronin Jr in 2001. Namely, SERVQUAL model by Parasuraman et al., the Nordic model by Grönroos, the Multilevel model by Dabholkar et al. (1996) and finally the Three-Component model by Rust and Oliver (Brady & Cronin, 2001). The Hierarchical model mitigated the shortcomings of the SERVQUAL model by clearly defining what needed to be reliable, responsive, empathic, assured and tangible. It implemented service quality perception based on evaluations by consumers and split them into three dimensions, which are further divided into sub-dimensions. Brady and Cronin expressed a limitation of the model as its inability to equally apply across industries, thus stress the importance of modifying and conceptualising the model to account for industry-specific factors (2001).

Interaction Quality

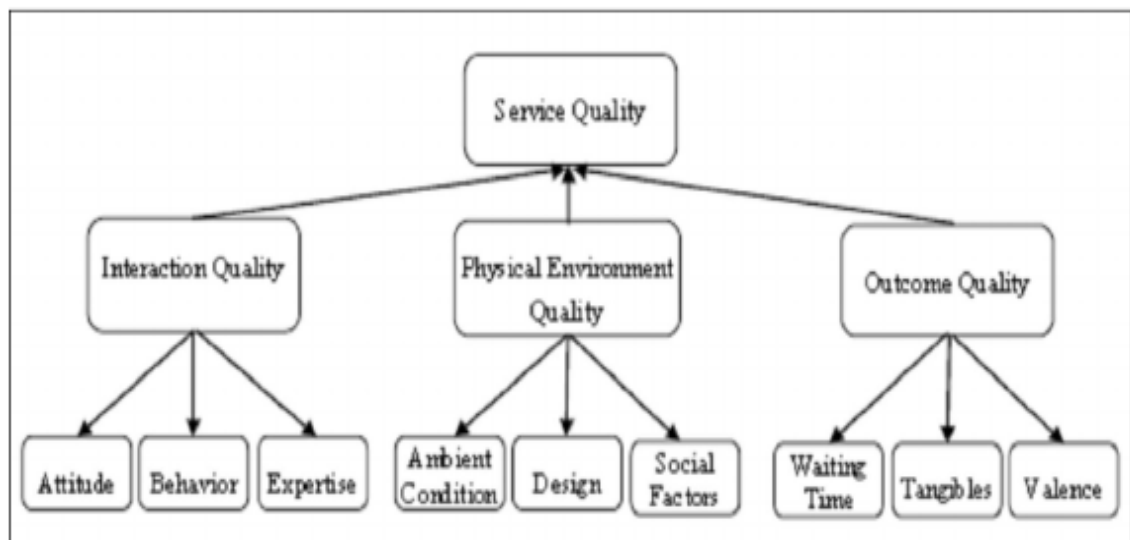
This deals with the employee-customer experiences. Arguably one of the most vital factors to influence customer satisfaction. The sub-dimensions under this are attitude, behaviour, and expertise. Things like a smile from an employee to remembering a returning customers name can go a long way to affect customer impressions positively. Also, offering good service quality is extremely important.

Physical Environment Quality

This dimension deals with the physical surroundings, setting, and structures which make up the organisation. Factors like cleanliness and general ambiance of the organisation have been proven to matter a great deal to the customer. Interior and exterior settings are very important and greatly influence positive and negative experiences. Sub-dimensions under this are ambient conditions, design, and social factors.

Outcome Quality

Last, but not least is the outcome quality of the organisation's services. Sub-dimensions include waiting time, tangibles and valence. This deals with the results of an organisations service performance and what customers achieve from these services. For example, students of Ashesi see waiting time as a waste of time. When students have to wait more than 5mins for their meal, they become dissatisfied. In the service industry, this is often mitigated by implementing queue management systems into operations of the firm.



4: The Hierarchical model by Brady & Cronin (2001)

Figure 6

Source: (Brady & Cronin, 2001)

3.6 Marketing Plan

From the needs assessment, it was realised that Munchies needs to devise a solution which will enable them to increase their market share from its current 12.6% and that its immediate problems involve improving their customer satisfaction by enhancing their quality of service. This solution should encompass a strategy to target

their market, segment it and position themselves in a space to provide substantial value to its customers. This will be done using the marketing mix tools; product, price, place and promotion. A marketing plan is a document which shows how the organisation's strategic objectives will be attained through selected marketing strategies and tactics, all the while placing the consumer at the centre of the plan. The marketing plan identifies the needs and wants of the consumer; it identifies competitors to analyse and even goes on to identify new product or market areas to venture into (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

3.7 Marketing Framework

3.7.1 Seven P's of the Marketing Mix

The 7P's of the marketing mix model are Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process and Physical evidence. These elements typically form the basis of a marketing plan.

Product – This element deals with how products and services can be developed

Price – This element deals with pricing models and strategies to represent the value of ones goods or services

Place – This element deals with exploring new distribution options to make your product or service more accessible

Promotion – This element deals with creating awareness, and communicating the features and benefits of the product or service to customers and potential customers

Physical evidence – This element deals with reassuring ones customers with tangibles.

Eg. Well-trained staff, aesthetic ambiance, etc.

People – The human resource of the company and their skill sets are just as important to the customer as the products or services you offer.

Process – The way your service is delivered forms part of what the customer is paying for, so how it is done is important to the customer. (Hanlon, 2018)

The 7P's of the Marketing Mix will be used as an implementation guide for the marketing mix, and the hierarchical service quality model discussed above will provide justification for the proposed strategy.

CHAPTER 4: SOLUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

4.1 The Solution

Due to the small size of Munchies as a company, it would need a marketing plan simple, comprehensive but thorough enough to implement. The plan should inculcate their current resources and should be seamless enough to integrate into the company's current systems. The proposed marketing plan was created using the 7 P's of the marketing mix with strategies and tactics backed by the Hierarchical service quality model.

4.1.1 Marketing Objectives and Brand Positioning

Munchies must have marketing objectives which will help them achieve both their short and long term goals. These objectives must be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound.

Objectives

1. Increase sales and market share by 10% and 3% respectively by the end of 2019.
2. To increase top of mind awareness (TOMA) of the brand among 10% of its customers by the end of each quarter.
3. Increase customer service and satisfaction ratings at the end of every quarter by 10% from 2019 – 2020.
4. To make Munchies the most preferred alternative to the two cafeterias at Ashesi.

Brand Positioning

A good brand position sets the tone for all marketing strategies that will be employed in order to achieve a company's marketing objectives. The brand position does this by identifying ways to create value for the customer in unique ways (Kotler & Keller, 2012).

Mission

Munchies' mission is to provide superior quality local fast-food at 'street food' prices

Vision

Munchies' vision is to dominate Ghana's street food and pub culture in all urban spaces, especially university campuses by creating the first Ghanaian owned fast food franchise

4.2 The Marketing Mix

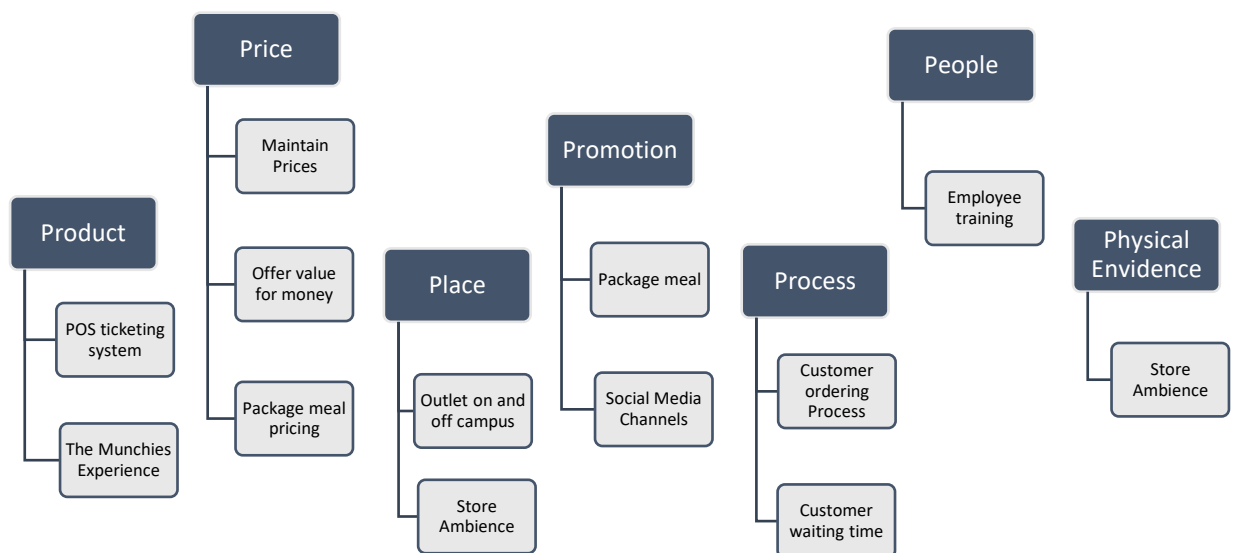


Figure 7 Proposed Solution for Munchies

4.2.1 Product Strategy

The most recurring issues a majority of customers have with Munchies are their response time to orders and the long waiting periods to get food. During the needs assessment, that issue was attributed to poor order management and processing on the part of Munchies' employees. To mitigate this issue a solution to this problem must properly aggregate orders, give customers a true sense of their wait time, efficiently and correctly allocate orders to their rightful customers and try to reduce

the wait time by half. I recommend a point of sale (POS) system for the Munchies personnel to mitigate this issue and provide solutions to the problems they currently face.

As learnt from the PESTLE analysis in chapter one, with regards to the technology used within the fast food industry, point of sale (POS) systems have become a necessity in most organisations. These POS systems generate sales reports, save time when ordering, reduce the risk of mistakes and regulate employee management (Monocello, 2010).

If Munchies is to get a point of sale software with a ticketing system, it will allow them to track and aggregate their orders, categorise them into phone-in and storefront orders, and this will, in turn, allow the employees to give customers a true sense of their wait time. The point of sale software would help employees keep track of orders and give customers a true sense of how long they are expected to wait. Additionally, by inculcating Ashesi's meal plan POS, Munchies will be able to capture the segment of customers who buy food exclusively with a meal plan card. According to the study conducted on the Ashesi market, 33.1% of the students fall within this segment.

Below are snapshots of Ashesi's meal plan POS, and more snapshots of the POS can be found in Appendix (*Figures 13, 14 & 15*). Both cafeterias, as well as Essentials minimart, make use of this POS to process meal plan purchases at Ashesi.

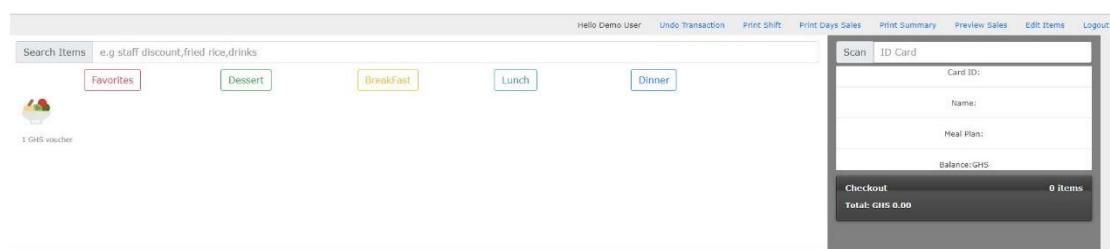


Figure 8 Home view of Ashesi's meal plan POS

The screenshot displays a Point of Sale (POS) interface for Ashesi's meal plan. At the top, there is a 'Scan' field containing the number '13159999'. Below this, the 'Card ID' is '13159999', the 'Name' is 'Guest Guest 10', and the 'Meal Plan' is '25'. The 'Balance' is 'GHS 15.50 (Active)'. The 'Checkout' section shows '1 items' with a quantity of '1' and a price of 'GHS 1.00'. The item is described as '1 GHS voucher'. The 'Total' is 'GHS 1.00', and there is a green 'Pay' button.

Figure 9 Item Checkout of Ashesi's meal plan POS

Munchies is a relatively small organisation, with less than ten employees, thus one person will be responsible for order processing at a time, in order to keep the flow of kitchen staff. The POS will place customers in a queue by giving them order numbers, keep track of customer details for delivery purposes and make deliveries more efficient because of the aggregated orders. Orders from similar locations will be aggregated for deliveries and delivered together to a central location.

Munchies currently does door-to-door deliveries upon request, however, customers have complained of a 45 minute to an hour long wait time when waiting for deliveries. My suggestion to this is to create general drop-off/meeting points for customers to pick up their food on campus. This will help aggregate orders in similar pickup locations and will reduce waiting time to at least 20 minutes.

The second product strategy for Munchies will be in line with Munchies' mission and vision. Thus, this tactic aims to distinguish their brand and differentiate them within the highly competitive market. In a market where there are relatively low

barriers to entry, differentiating ones' business from that of your competitors is paramount.

Rather than just a place to get food when customers are hungry, I suggest Munchies becomes "an experience". All tactics within the firm will be targeted at making "The Munchies Experience". Munchies currently allows the customer to call and make orders, however there is no fixed number that customers can call. Suggestively, a better approach would be for Munchies to purchase a phone strictly for orders- a consistent number that customer can call to order from. Anytime an employee picks a phone call order a well-rehearsed opening to kick start the conversation will be employed.

Scenario

cell phone rings

Phone Munchies employee: "Hello this is Munchies, can I have your order?"

Customer: "Hi, Can I order indomie?"

By doing this, the customer is met with professionalism. According to the Hierarchical service quality model, attitude and behaviour are vital interaction qualities in good service quality (Brady & Cronin, 2001).

4.2.2 Pricing Strategy

In studying the buying behaviour of the market, certain characteristics were brought to light. An average of 50.8% of the students eat a proper meal twice a day, and 44.6% of the students spend between GHS 10 and GHS 15 on a proper meal. Munchies currently prices higher than the maximum amount that 17.1% of the respondents are willing to spend, i.e. below GHS 10. However, Munchies can target the whopping 82.9% who are willing to spend a maximum of GHS 10 and above on their meals. Munchies' prices currently range from GHS 10 and GHS 21, thus this

range of prices is suitable for the customers and beneficial to both Munchies and their customer base. My recommendation is that Munchies maintain their current prices.

Secondly, a package meal, which will be discussed further in the Promotion strategy segment of the paper, is a combined meal and drink option which will be offered to customers who spend more than GHS 17.50. Primary research conducted on the market revealed that 67.5% of respondents are willing to spend between GHS 15 – GHS 20 on meals. By finding the median amount of the range there is more of an incentive for customers to attempt to reach the threshold in order to get a free drink-the incentive.

4.2.3 Distribution Strategy

In order to increase top of mind awareness, convenience and accessibility are key factors to consider. Munchies in the short run will open a distribution outlet on the Ashesi campus. This will capture a larger percentage of the market, and increase revenue for the company, in line with their objectives. The clean and serene environment on campus will be an incentive for more customers to buy. By moving on campus, it will also give Munchies the mandate to receive Ashesi's meal plan POS system. This in return will allow Munchies to process meal plan payments and include that to their revenue streams.

Munchies currently has two main ways of distributing its products, namely through deliveries and through in-store pickups. They also have three categories of orders, namely pre-orders for a later time, phone call orders and in-store purchase orders for immediate purchases. Consistently providing quality products and giving the best customer service are key ways of capturing positive top of mind awareness.

The second distribution strategy tactic is to revamp the storefront of Munchies. In line with creating "The Munchies Experience", I suggest that Munchies

restructures their store to look less like a street vendor and more like a creative space for selling. This space will include a seating area for customers waiting for their orders and music in the background. This falls in line with the Hierarchical service quality models physical quality subcategories, namely, design and social factors. One of Munchies' short term goals is to sell out of a food truck, Jess Ness (2017) in his article "A complete Guide to Starting a Food Truck Business" created a guide for entrepreneurs looking to enter that creative space.

- Decide on a concept for the food truck
- Get permits, licences and meet regulatory requirements
- Buy and equip the food truck
- Operating and promoting the food truck

4.2.4 Promotional Strategy

Promotion, as stated above deals with putting a company's brand and message across to the right audience in the right way. Primary research showed that 67.5% of the studied market is willing to spend between GHS 15 – GHS 20 on meals. These "meals" are made up of a proper meal (something consisting of carbohydrates, proteins and sometimes vegetables) and for most students, a drink. With this kind of information, I advise Munchies to create a package meal that would come with a drink. Interviews with some of Munchies' customers revealed that six in every ten customers would want Munchies to start selling drinks. Munchies currently lacks the infrastructure to include selling drinks as one of their revenue streams, owing to this I recommend the package meal instead. This deal will only be offered within a stipulated time frame, and if the customer spends more than GHS 17.50. By doing this, Munchies will be able to keep a controlled number of drinks for the rationed number of distinct customers.

The second promotion tactic would be for Munchies to establish an online presence. This will be ushered by social media accounts to interact with their customers, solicit feedback, and advertise promotions. Social media is increasingly becoming an effective tool for digital marketing (Peterson and Wilson, 1985). Brand awareness, an increase of sales, customer service, and content distribution are typical goals of social media as a branch of digital marketing, however, Munchies will focus on customer service facilitation in their social media approach. Out of all commonly used social media, Twitter poses the most lucrative choice for the proposed purpose. Twitter is a great tool for one-on-one interactions with customers (Basri & Siam, 2017), and a customer satisfaction score will be placed on the account to give customers a chance to rate Munchies' customer satisfaction ability in real time. Figures 10 below demonstrates a demo of Munchies' twitter account soliciting for feedback from its customers. Data analytics can be viewed and analysed on Twitter, making it a useful tool for Munchies' digital marketing aspirations. Incentives can be associated with social media interactions, in order to get large numbers of customers to participate and interact with the Twitter account.



Figure 10

4.2.5 Process Strategy

Munchies' process strategy will have to be very tactical. The processes of the firm form part of how customers will perceive the business, therefore, it is very important to evaluate the processes of the firm which the customers will be engaged in.

The customer's ordering process is the initial interaction the customer has with the business before they interact with any tangible offerings; the food. How the employees process orders and how long it takes an employee to get food into the hands of the customer are factors to consider under the process strategy. My suggestion is for Munchies to clearly stipulate their ordering processes into three categories, and cater to each category differently. The first ordering type will be pre-orders. This is the least common ordering type, where customers call to order their food ahead of time for a later pick up or deliver. The second most common order form is phone orders. Customers call in to order their food for pick up or delivery, and unlike the pre-orders there is a more immediate need to the orders. The last, but most common order type are the in-store orders. Customers come to the store to either place an order to return for the food at a later time or wait for it to be prepared. By clearly stipulating these ordering types, it would be easier and more efficient for Munchies' employees to cater to the individual needs of these customer groups. The POS system discussed in the product strategy segment above will aid in clearly stipulating the order types and process the orders accordingly.

Long customer waiting time, as mentioned throughout this report is a recurring issue that Munchies must mitigate. Even though the POS system is aimed at reducing waiting time, there are other methods Munchies should inculcate in order to rectify the issue. According to Anupa Rongala (2015), the Vice President of Business

Enabling Function at Invensis Technology, some effective ways to manage customer wait time are as follows:

- Give customers a realistic and clear expectation of how long they will actually wait
- Keep customers occupied while they wait in order to make the wait pleasant
- Communicate when there are delays

Rongala (2015) highlights 9 ways to effectively manage customer waiting time, however the above mentioned points are what Munchies should focus on. By giving customers a true sense of how long their wait will be, customers are given the chance to make judgment calls on whether to wait or come back later. Secondly by keeping customers occupied, it creates some sort of diversion for customers. Munchies can play music to keep the wait period pleasant, provide a sitting area for customers as they wait and mount some games for customers to while away the time; I suggest a dart board. Lastly, delays arise for various reasons within Munchies. By communicating these delays and allaying the concerns of customers upfront, it allows customer to empathize and not expect more than the company can deliver.

4.2.6 People Strategy

Even though Munchies is running a business with a product offering, customer service and their delivery service form part of their customer offerings. In addition, in order for the suggestions above to be implemented, it is necessary for the employees to be trained. I suggest monthly trainings be held for the employees by the current CEO of the business. This training will encapsulate employee-customer relationship facilitation, how to use the proposed POS system, sanitation and hygiene practices, recipe enhancement, as well as improving existing systems. Seeing as Munchies runs alongside the school calendar, I recommend the training sessions be held twice a semester. Once at the beginning of the semester and another at the end of it.

The training sessions will also serve as an official way for the owner to solicit feedback from the employees in order to improve working conditions for them and to improve the business holistically.

4.2.7 Physical Evidence

This aspect deals with tangibles, and things that the customer can interact or engage with. Well trained and professionally dressed personnel or storefront ambience, to name a few are the types of elements that would constitute physical evidence. The physical evidence aspect adequately encapsulates the entire market plan. In essence, the various strategy outputs fall under the physical evidence strategy. The POS ticketing system, the seating area to be provided, the professional staff they interact with, etc.

4.3 Expected Returns of Solution Adoption

The questionnaire divulged that a whopping 50.9 of respondents who do not buy from Munchies gave the inability to use their meal plan to pay as the reason for not buying from them. By opening an outlet on campus, not only will Munchies be able to capture a fraction of the 20% of students who stay on-campus and consider Munchies to be too far from them, but they will also be able to capture at least 35% of student who make purchases with meal plans exclusively.

The expected returns for implementing the “Package meal” will be to capture the 67.5% of incentivized students willing to spend between GHS 15 – GHS 20. By giving customers who spend more than GHS 17.50 this benefit i.e. “free drink”. The expectation is that customers who spend below this threshold will be encouraged to spend more to unlock the added incentive.

4.4 Implementation Plan

This section of the paper provides specific guidelines regarding personnel responsible for controlling and spearheading various aspects of the proposed solution. The implementation plan shows who, when, where, and how the proposed solution will be incorporated into the operations of Munchies

Table 4

Activity	Person Responsible	When	Details	Estimated Cost (Ghs)
POS System	Hired professional	September – December 2019	This will first be implemented on the soon-to-be-opened distribution outlet on campus, to aid in order facilitation and reduce waiting times. A hired professional will teach Munchies employees how to use the system	Campus setup: varied Hired professional fees: varied
The Munchies Experience	All Munchies personnel	From September 2019	This will be implemented at all Munchies outlets to create an atmosphere for professionalism and improved service quality	Company Phone: 200 Training: varied
Campus outlet	Munchies personnel	September 2019	A distribution outlet for Munchies will be opened on the Ashesi campus to attract more customers and enable meal plan payments	Campus setup: varied
Store ambience	Munchies personnel	July – September 2019	This will be implemented at Munchies off-campus distribution outlet to create a pleasant environment for customers and to keep customers occupied while waiting	Sitting area: 200 Dart board: 100 Speaker: 400: Store-front renovation: 3000
Package meal	Munchies personnel	September 2019	This will be run at all Munchies distribution outlet to incentivize customers to purchase beyond a certain price threshold	Cost of drinks: 300/month
Employee training	Daniel Bempah	September 2019	All Munchies' employees will be taken through process training twice a semester. The aim of this	Varied

			is to present customers with trained and professional employees.	
Social media account	Student hires	April	This aspect of the plan aims at creating a platform to solicit feedback from its customers. This will be done on Twitter, seeing as this platform allows users to rate certain factors. Munchies will take advantage of this functionality to get customers to rate their services, and will serve as a medium to advertise promotions that Munchies will occasionally hold.	Hired student personnel (Public relations, advertising and content capturing): 100-200/month/pers on

4.5 Monitoring and Control

This aspect of the chapter deals with the maintenance culture of Munchies towards proposed solution. The selected key performance indicators provide a focus for strategic and operational improvement.

Table 5

Key Performance Indicator	How	Frequency
Sales, marketing and administration KPI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing and advertising cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calculating Marketing returns on investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One semester after implementation of the marketing plan Once a semester subsequently
Kitchen management KPI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Menu item profit and popularity Best/worst selling item 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the Twitter platform Munchies' sales records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twice a semester Specifically, after a new item is added to the menu
Order Management KPI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer waiting time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer satisfaction scores using the Twitter platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily (Always available to customers)
Employee-Customer Relation KPI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer satisfaction scores using the Twitter platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily (Always available to customers)

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION, LIMITATION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter aims at giving a general conclusion to the entire project. Suggestions and recommendations for future works are also outlined here. Also, limitations that were encountered are discussed, and finally, lessons learnt during the entire duration of the project are mentioned.

5.2 Limitations and Challenges

Low responses to the survey that was issued to the Ashesi population. Deductions were based on the responses of less than 40% of the Ashesi student population. Even though this limitation was seemingly mitigated by including other primary research techniques and tools, having more than 50% of the population would have been greatly preferred.

During interviews with some of Munchies' worker proved to be challenging due to language barriers that were encountered. Even though helpful translations were provided, some content may have been lost in translation.

5.3 Recommendations

In the 21st century information literacy is the driving force to improvement and development. By developing a database to store customer information, Munchies will be able to enhance customer relationship management, properly target specific segments and provide products and services catered to the specific needs of their customers.

In order to boost sales, Munchies should introduce the Customer of the Month promotion. This will reward the customer with the highest amount of purchases over a stipulated period. This would require Munchies to keep a database of individual customer buys. The Customer of the Month initiative would slow down operations and owing to the fact that Munchies does not currently have the equipment to make

this data collection process efficient, I advise they start out through the discretion of employees. The “Customer of the Month” will be rewarded with prizes. Munchies could partner with businesses outside of Ashesi to sponsor this prize. The owner can tap into a network of Ashesi alum with connections. A typical example for a prize would be a voucher to watch a movie at the Silverbird Cinemas.

Another recommendation that would greatly benefit Munchies and propel them to achieving their long term goals is to have a full financial valuation of the business drawn up. This will help the CEO to determine the profitability of the business, so that accurate decisions can be made towards its growth of the business.

Lastly, a Munchies mobile application can be made in order to simplify the customer ordering process, speed up waiting time and facilitate deliveries.

5.4 Lessons Learnt from the Project

This project has taught me a great deal about time management and most especially stakeholder management. My supervisor was very supportive and diligent in her role, however, she gave me a level of autonomy throughout the process, and I feel that helped me understand the content of my work even more than I would have had she not.

Additionally, working on this project introduced me to the disparities between content learnt in the class setting and issues that arise in real-world consulting. The education I have received at Ashesi was beneficial to building my knowledge base and capabilities, however, I had to read wide and apply new concepts that I studied and learnt how to use outside of the classroom

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APPENDIX

6.1 Interview Guides

Munchies employees

What is a typical day for you like?

What are the peak hours?

What problems do you face in a typical day?

How do you address these problems?

(If they don't understand the question give examples—do you call Bembah, do you figure the issue out yourself?)

What things do you need in order to do your work well?

How many hours do you work for in a day?

What is your relationship with Bembah like?

How do customers interact with you?

(If needed responses are not given, suggest: impatient, rude, polite, cordial, friendly)

What are the systems used by Munchies?

Figure 11

Munchies CEO

What is a typical day for you like?

What is your job description?

What are the systems you have established for the company?

How often do you go to the site?

Do you have an assistant or second in command?

What are some of the problems Munchies currently faces

How do you solve problems that come up?

What are some of your costs?

Are you trying to control cost? Are you succeeding?

Do you ever interact with your customers?/How do you relate with your customers?

Do you have to micromanage your employees?

Do you give your employees any incentives?

What marketing strategies have you undertaken?

What goals do/did you have for a marketing strategy?

How effective was the strategy?

Figure 12

6.2 Perceptual Maps

Disclaimer: Perceptual maps were generated using a template from www.perceptualmaps.com (Nielson, 2014)

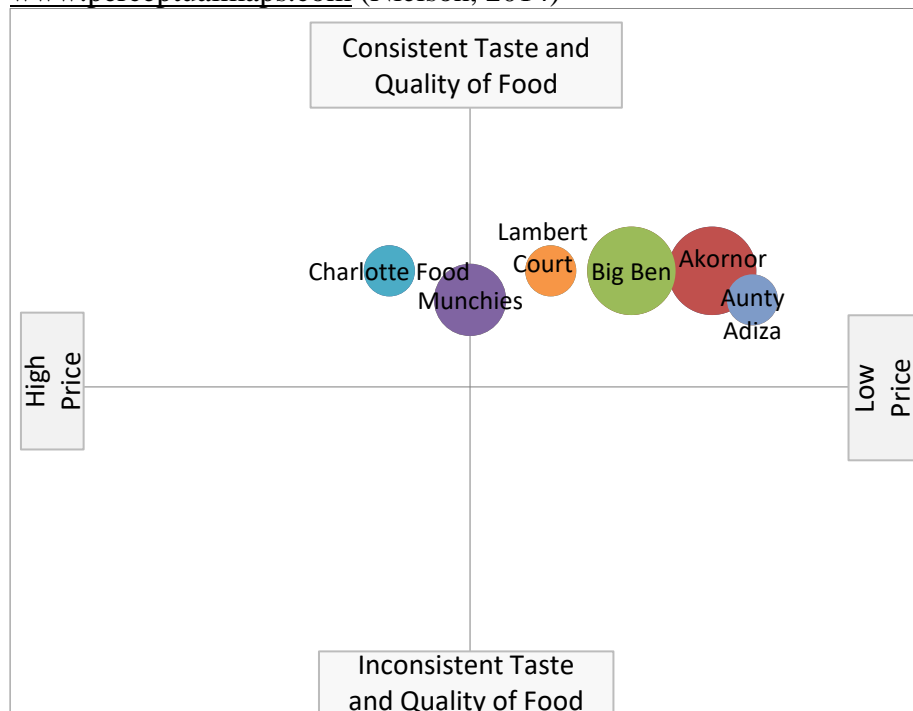


Figure 13 Price VS Taste and Quality of Food



Figure 14 Waiting time VS Taste and Quality of Food

6.3 Ashesi Meal Plan POS

Mplan POS

Hello Demo User

Sales as at 2019-04-02

Guest: GHS 1 for 1 people

ID	First Name	Surname	Total
13159999	Guest	Guest 10	1

Figure 15

13159999

X

.....

Close

Submit

Figure 16

Undo Transaction

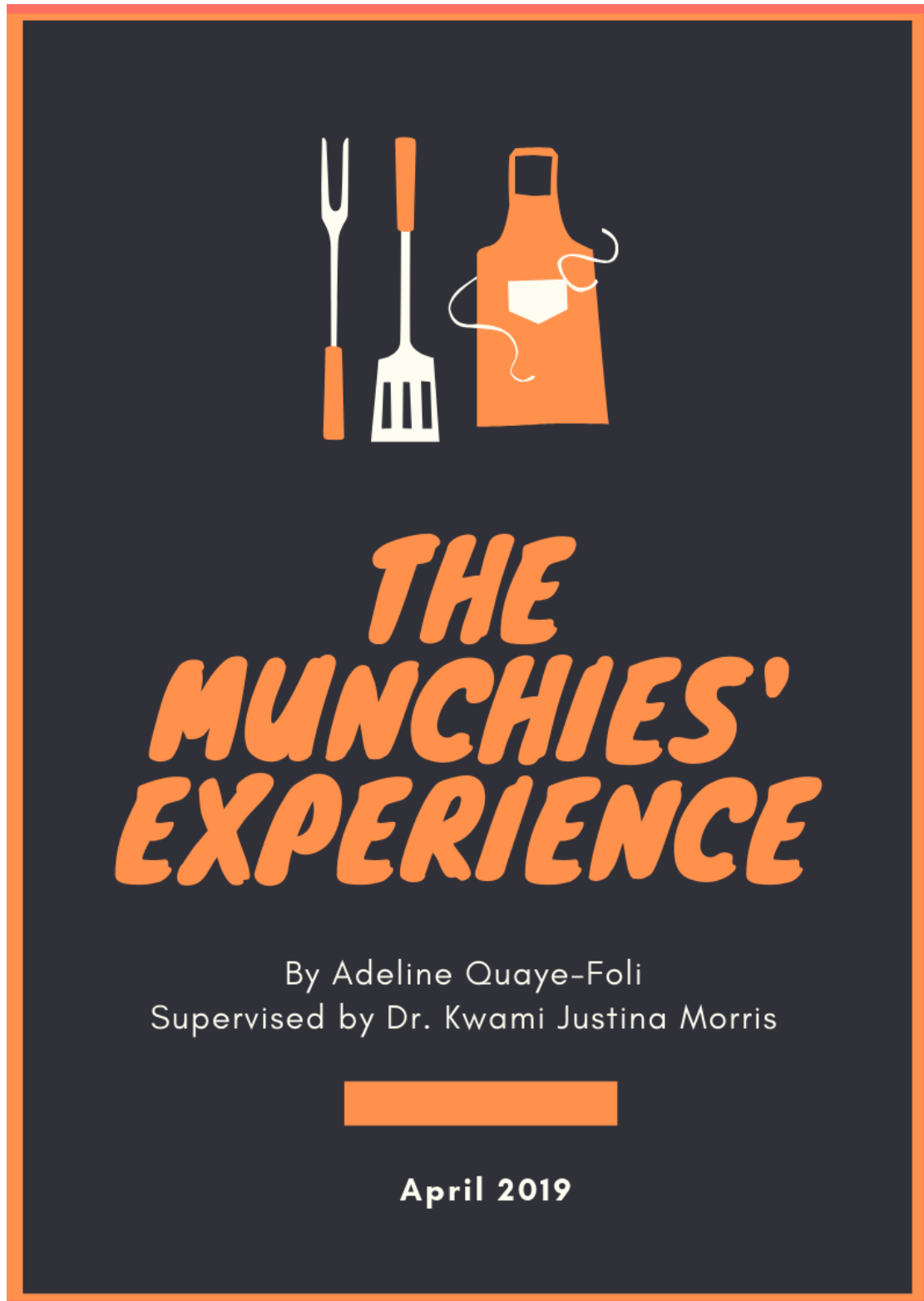
X

enter transaction number

Close

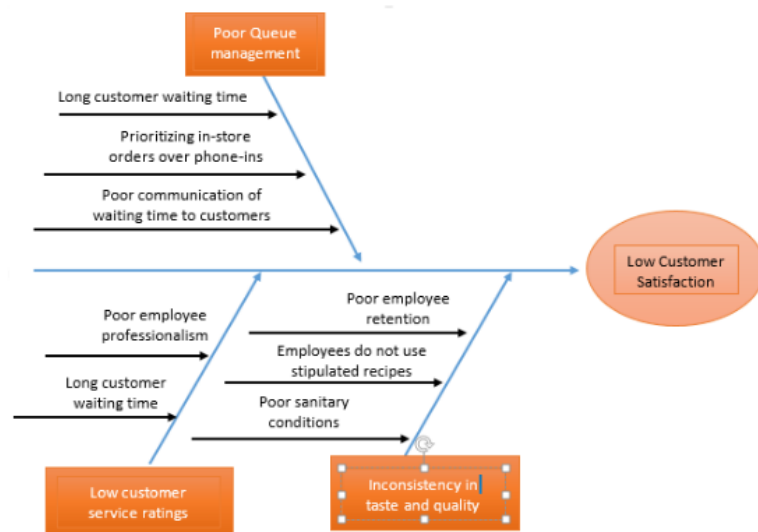
Figure 17

6.4 Dashboard for Client

*Figure 14*

The objectives of the needs assessment were to:

1. Analyse the day-to-day operations of Munchies to find gaps in terms of customer satisfaction.
2. Perform a comparative analysis between the customer satisfaction abilities of Munchies and its leading competitors.
3. Study the buying behaviour of the Ashesi community, in order to make accurate deductions and recommendations for Munchies.



PROBLEM STATEMENT

Munchies since it began its operations in 2016 has not had a structured marketing approach to target customers and improve customer satisfaction. Customers complain of long waiting times and inconsistency in the taste and quality of their food.

Munchies is currently the third most preferred food vendor at Ashesi, however, their unprofessional staff, coupled with the above mentioned problems puts them at a risk of losing market share if their quality of service is not improved.

Figure 15

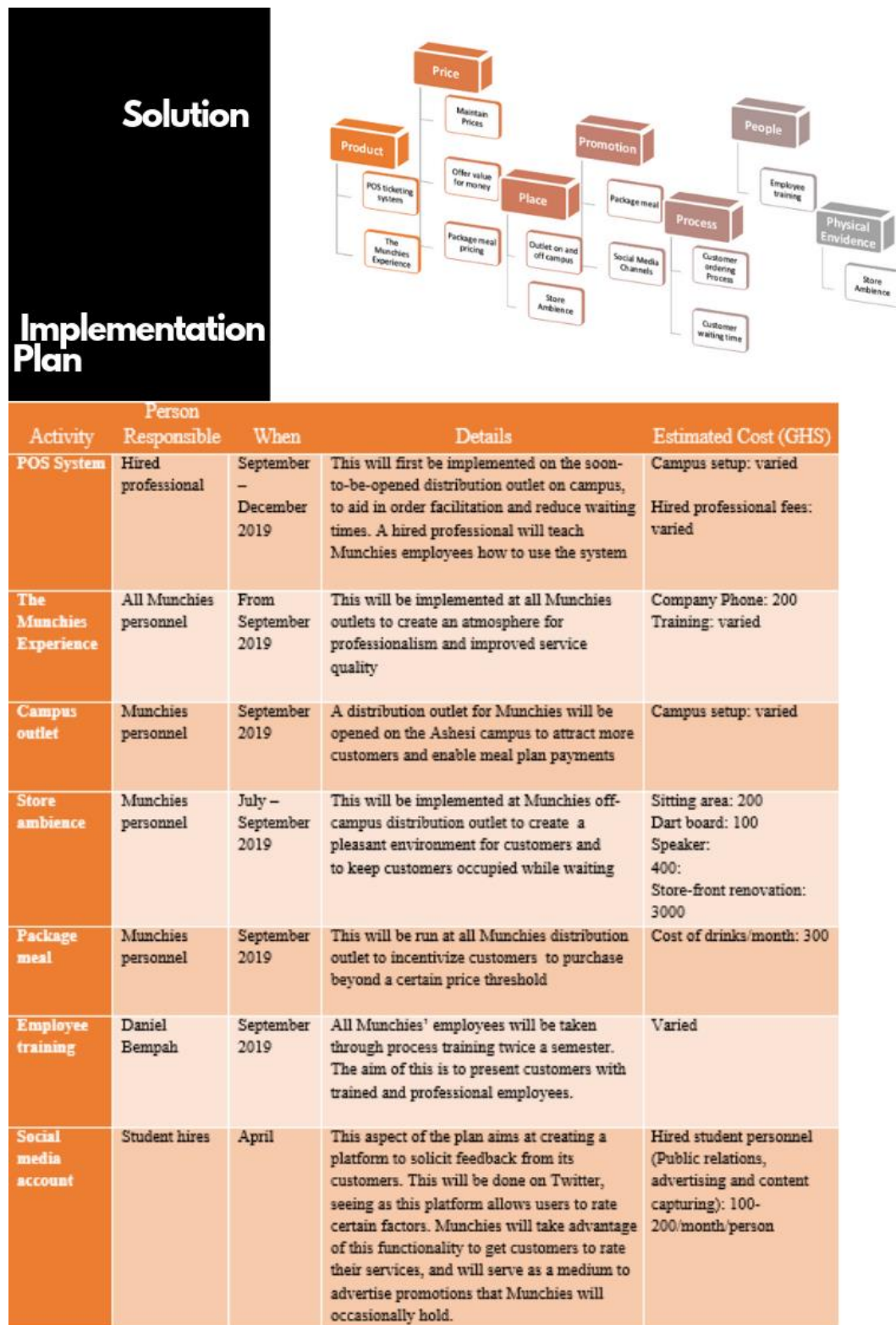


Figure 16

6.4 Consent Form

I would like to ask your permission to be part of a market study for my Final Capstone Project. Your participation in this study will be greatly appreciated. You are free to be part of this activity, and you are equally free to withdraw from the study at any moment during the activity. There are no risks of being part of this study, however a major benefit of joining this study is to improve the services and quality of products offered by Munchies.

The data from this study will be used for strictly academic purposes, and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. At the end of the study, the information would be coded and placed in an encrypted database, and the physical evidence will be destroyed.

If you have any questions, you can ask me, Adeline Quaye-Foli, the researcher behind this study. (My contact details are provided below). If you agree to be part of this study, you will be contacted to either participate in a focus group, fill a questionnaire, or be interviewed by myself.

For further information, you can contact my supervisor, Dr. Kwami Justina Morris.

This study, and consent form have been reviewed by Ashesi IRB for Human Subjects Research.

For further information contact the committee through irb@ashesi.edu.gh.

Participant

Date

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